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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Note verbale dated 18 April 1994 from the Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States to the United Nations Office at Geneva, addressed to the Centre for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States to the United Nations Office at Geneva presents its compliments to the Centre for Human Rights and has the honour to transmit herewith the monthly report on Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories during the month of February 1994. The Permanent Mission of the League of Arab States wishes to express its grave concern at the deterioration of the situation of the Arab civilian population in the territories occupied by Israel, as detailed in the report annexed hereto, and requests the Centre for Human Rights to regard this report as an official document and to distribute it to the members of the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-first session.

GE.94-12817 (E)

Report on Israeli settlement and human rights violations in the occupied Palestinian territories in the month of February 1994

At the Ibrahimi Shrine in the town of Hebron, a Jewish settler added a new massacre to the series of Zionist massacres in occupied Palestine. That odious massacre, in which more than 36 persons were killed and hundreds seriously wounded, was one of the most shocking of the Israeli massacres motivated by a deep-rooted hatred of Palestinians even when they are worshipping peacefully in a holy place.

That dreadful massacre provoked widespread angry reactions among international and Arab public opinion in all parts of the world and gave rise to stupefaction when it was discovered that the Israeli authorities had colluded with the perpetrators of that crime and attempted to cover up their activities.

According to Israeli press reports, the Israeli settler had planned his operation carefully and had chosen Friday, when Muslims worship in the Ibrahimi Shrine, in order to achieve the largest possible death-toll.

Collusion between the authorities and the perpetrators of the massacre is evident from the behaviour of the troops assigned to guard the shrine, who were not at their posts just before and during the massacre, thereby failing to fulfil their duty of protecting the shrine from attacks by armed settlers. People are wondering how the killer was permitted to enter the shrine carrying such a large quantity of weapons and ammunition and why, when the gunfire was heard, none of the soldiers went inside to prevent further slaughter even though they knew that a settler might be in danger inside the shrine.

Eyewitnesses confirmed that a large number of worshippers who rushed to the doors of the mosque in order to escape from the hail of bullets inside were shot and killed by the soldiers outside the shrine who fired volleys of bullets at them, thereby increasing the death-toll in and outside the shrine.

At the very time when the Israeli Government was deploring that massacre, its troops were opening fire on civilians near the Alia Hospital to which the dead and wounded were being taken. The Israeli soldiers used force and violence to disperse the protesting Palestinians who wished to express their feelings of pain and grief, thereby increasing their sufferings.

That odious massacre committed by terrorist settlers confirmed that the lives and security of the Palestinians cannot be safeguarded while those settlers remain in the occupied territories, since their continued possession of weapons will pose an ongoing threat to the lives of the defenceless Palestinians.

Accordingly, the international community should be urged to assume its responsibilities and adopt positions based on international conventions and resolutions. The United Nations should protect the Palestinian civilians and take measures conducive to the achievement of that aim.

Since that criminal massacre, the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been living in a state of total isolation from the world since the authorities decided to declare them closed military zones which no one can enter or leave.

A statement issued by the Islamic Committee in the middle of the preceding month gave a clear indication of the intensive and repeated Israeli attempts to formulate specific arrangements aimed at imposing control over a number of Islamic mosques, including the Ibrahimi Shrine.

The statement referred to information that had recently been leaked by Israeli sources, to the effect that the occupation authorities were discussing the future supervision of some of those Islamic places of worship, through the establishment of special arrangements under which religious rites could be performed by both Muslims and Jews, after the settlers demanded the right to engage in acts of religious worship, like the Muslims, in a number of mosques, including the Ibrahimi Shrine, Joseph's Tomb at Nablus, Nabi Samwil at Jerusalem and Rachel's Tomb at Bethlehem.

The Israeli authorities are also continuing their daily encroachments on Arab land and their acts of aggression against the Arab population. From the beginning of the occupation to the end of February 1994, the Israeli authorities have confiscated a total of 3,139,975 dunums of land in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. They have also proceeded with their attempts to promote settlement and have prepared plans to encourage Jewish immigrants to settle in the 186 settlements in the West Bank and the 20 settlements in the Gaza Strip.

With regard to violations of the fundamental freedoms and rights of the population, the Israeli authorities continued to implement their inhuman policies and imposed individual and collective punishments, as illustrated by the sentences passed on 71 residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip who appeared before the military courts. The sentences ranged from imprisonment for a few months to several years, with heavy fines.

They also issued nine administrative detention orders for periods ranging from five to six months, demolished six houses, killed 61 Palestinians and injured hundreds of other Palestinians.

The following details concerning Israeli violations were reported in the Arabic press published in the city of Jerusalem during the month of February.

I. Confiscation of land and settlement

(a) Confiscation of land

Israeli bulldozers expanded the settlement of "Efrat" by annexing 150 dunums of land owned by Arab residents of the village of Khadr in the district of Bethlehem. (Al-Quds, 4/2/1994)

The newspaper Kol ha-Ir reported that the Israel Lands Administration had decided to recommend to the Israeli Ministry of Finance the confiscation of about 15,000 dunums of land situated between the settlement of "Pisgat Zeev" and French Hill at Jerusalem. (Al-Quds, 5/2/1994)

The Israeli authorities are constructing a settlement road to link the settlement of "Talmon B" to the settlement of "Nahliel" which has been established on land belonging to the village of Beitillu. This road crosses Arab-owned land which is expected to be confiscated. (Al-Quds, 17/2/1994)

(b) Expansion of settlements

The settlers at the settlement of "Beitar Ilit" situated between the villages of Husan and Nahhalin have begun to expand the borders of their settlement towards the south at the expense of land belonging to Nahhalin. The settlers have begun the construction of graded roads covering an area of 500 m^2 on orchard land belonging to the village. (Al-Quds, 16/2/1994)

A new settlement nucleus known as "Neve Yehudi" has been established near the settlement of "Karnei Shomron". (Al-Quds, 17/2/1994)

Israeli bulldozers belonging to the settlement of "Beitar" have begun to level land belonging to the village of Husan in the district of Bethlehem. The levelling operations include the construction of a road, 1 km in length and 4 m in width, to serve the population of the settlement, as well as preparations for the construction of new housing for settlers. (Al-Quds, 17/2/1994)

Settlers from the settlement of "Ofra", which has been established on land belonging to the villages of Silwad and Ein Yabrud in the district of Ramallah, have expanded the borders of their settlement by confiscating 100 dunums of land belonging to the village of Ein Yabrud. (Al-Quds, 25/2/1994)

(c) Settlement roads

Israeli bulldozers have constructed roads and highways on land situated within the boundaries of the city of Jerusalem. The purpose of the construction of these roads is to link them to settlement road No. 60, which has swallowed up tens of thousands of dunums of land belonging to residents of the town of Beit Jala and the village of Khadr. (Al-Quds, 12/2/1994)

II. Attacks on Arab citizens and their property

(a) Encroachments on land

The Israeli authorities continued to bulldoze and uproot trees on Arab land for the alleged purpose of constructing settlement roads or expanding the borders of settlements. These encroachments are illustrated by the following:

The uprooting of 240 olive saplings on land belonging to the village of Qaryut in the district of Nablus. (Al-Nahar, 8/2/1994)

The uprooting of 220 olive saplings on land belonging to the villages of Mughaiyir and Turmus'aiya in the district of Ramallah. (Al-Quds, 17/2/1994)

The uprooting of 10 fruit-bearing trees at Khan Yunis. (Al-Nahar, 23/2/1994)

The uprooting of 500 fruit-bearing olive trees on land belonging to the village of Nahhalin. (Al-Quds, 26/2/1994)

(b) Attacks on Arab citizens

The Jewish settlers are launching daily attacks on Arab-owned property in various areas. They throw stones and fire shots at Arab citizens and their houses and prevent Arab vehicles from using roads by erecting barriers to stop Arab workers from entering Israel. They deliberately close those roads during peak traffic hours when workers are travelling to their places of employment. These attacks by Israeli soldiers or Jewish settlers are illustrated by the following:

Israeli military forces, acting in conjunction with Border Guards and Israeli police units, launched a large-scale campaign against commercial stallholders, itinerant pedlars and local vehicle drivers throughout the town of Gaza. Dozens of summonses were issued and exorbitant fines were imposed. (Al-Quds, 2/2/1994)

Israeli military forces raided the Ahli Hospital at Gaza, searched the premises and assaulted the patients and the hospital's medical and nursing staff. (Al-Quds, 2/2/1994)

Settlers opened fire on three Arab-owned commercial establishments in the town of Hebron. (Al-Quds, 4/2/1994)

Israeli soldiers raided and searched the Atqiya mosque in the centre of the town of Hebron. (Al-Nahar, 11/2/1994)

Israeli military forces raided the offices of the Islamic Trade Union for the Workers of Public Service and Productive Institutions at Ramallah and seized all the documents and files that they found there. (Al-Quds, 14/2/1994)

The Israeli occupation authorities closed the Al-Ain mosque at Bira. They also closed another mosque at the village of Beitin in the district of Ramallah. (Al-Quds, 16/2/1994)

Israeli settlers attacked the home of a Palestinian resident of Hebron, breaking its windows and injuring its occupants. (Al-Nahar, 17/2/1994)

Israeli settlers closed the road to Halhul in the southern part of the West Bank during a demonstration in which they chanted "death to the Arabs!". (Al-Quds, 20/2/1994)

Settlers attacked two ambulances belonging to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society at Hebron while they were passing through Halhul. They broke the windows of one of the vehicles and assaulted its driver and the physician who was travelling with him. (Al-Quds, 2/2/1994)

A group of about 100 armed settlers from "Kiryat Arba" raided the town of Halhul, attacked Arab-owned property and houses and broke the windows of 10 vehicles and 15 houses at which they threw stones. (Al-Quds, 21/2/1994)

An Israeli military unit raided the offices of the Zakat (Alms Tax) Committee at Bethlehem and confiscated files, records and documents (Al-Quds, 22/2/1994)

Tax collectors, accompanied by Israeli army units, raided the Shaab Pharmacy in the town of Hebron and confiscated pharmaceutical products valued at 30,000 shekels. (Al-Quds, 23/2/1994)

Israeli troops raided the UNRWA office in the Gaza Strip and searched the premises on the pretext of a search for "wanted" persons. (Al-Quds, 24/2/1994)

Israeli troops searched houses in the village of Sarta in the district of Nablus after imposing a curfew. Settlers also raided the village on several occasions, setting fire to a shop and breaking the windows of a number of houses. (Al-Quds, 25/2/1994)

III. Practices in violation of human rights in the occupied territories

1. Arrests

(a) Mass arrests

Occupation forces launched a campaign of mass arrests in the course of which hundreds of young Palestinian men were detained. These mass arrests in the occupied territories are illustrated by the following:

Three Palestinians arrested at Hebron	Al-Nahar, 3/2/1994
Twenty-five young men arrested at Ramallah	Al-Quds, 10/2/1994
Fifteen Palestinians arrested at Ramallah	Al-Quds, 16/2/1994
Five Palestinians arrested at Jerusalem	Al-Quds, 18/2/1994
Three Palestinians arrested at Hebron	Al-Quds, 23/2/1994
Three young men arrested at Jabalia camp in the Gaza Strip	Al-Quds, 24/2/1994
Fifteen students arrested at the College of Education in the Gaza Strip	Al-Quds, 24/2/1994
Eleven young men arrested at Jerusalem	Al-Quds, 1/3/1994

(b) Administrative detention

During the month, the Israeli authorities placed nine Palestinians in administrative detention for periods ranging from five to six months (reported in editions of the Al-Quds newspaper from 2 February to 1 March 1994).

(c) Sentences passed on Arab citizens

In February 1994, Israeli military courts passed harsh sentences of imprisonment, including life imprisonment, on residents of the occupied territories. During the month, 71 Palestinians appeared before Israeli military courts in the occupied territories (as reported in editions of the Al-Quds newspaper from 2 February to 1 March 1994).

Eleven were sentenced to life imprisonment. An average fine of 700 shekels was also imposed on each convicted person. The total of these fines was estimated at about 56,000 Israeli shekels, i.e., about US$ 20,000.

(d) Conditions of detention and ill-treatment of detainees

The Israeli authorities issued an unjust order under the terms of which bearded Palestinians, and particularly those wearing the Palestinian head-dress, were prohibited from entering Gaza Central Prison to visit their relatives who were detained there. (Al-Quds, 10/2/1994)

At Fari'a prison, 36 detainees continued their hunger strike which they began on 3 February in protest against their solitary confinement for more than one month. The detainees on hunger strike are demanding that the administration send them back to the Negev prison or other central prisons.

The Palestinian detainees at the Dhahiriya detention centre in the district of Hebron have been on hunger strike since the beginning of February in protest at the deplorable health and living conditions in which they have been detained for several months.

Detainees who have recently been released from the Negev desert prison confirmed that the administration of that detention centre had recently reopened cell blocks that it had closed following the signature of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles. Hundreds of detainees had been transferred from Jenin, Megiddo, Fari'a, Hebron and Dhahiriya prisons to the Negev detention centre, thereby increasing the sufferings of the detainees at a time when the prison administration was engaging in a campaign of harassment of the detainees in an attempt to restrict their rights.

The detainees mentioned the skin diseases that were becoming widespread among the inmates due to the lack of health care and interruption of the water supply. The administration was also continuing to take measures designed to make life difficult for the detainees by, for example, preventing their families from bringing them food and preventing the detainees from engaging in acts of religious worship. (Al-Quds, 20/2/1994)

Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, announced that the number of Palestinian detainees in Israeli prisons amounted to about 9,000 persons.

However, human rights organizations, including the Mandela Institute, affirmed that the number of detainees amounted to 11,500. According to the Institute, there are three types of detention centres: military detention centres such as Megiddo, Fari'a, Dhahiriya and Ansar; central prisons run by the Department of Prisons; and police custody centres such as Maskubeya, Jalama and Petah Tiqwa. (Al-Quds, 21/2/1994)

2. Restrictions on freedom of movement and travel

During the month, the Israeli authorities imposed a curfew on several areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the villages of Qarawat Bani Hassan, Zawiya and Rafat in the governorate of Ramallah where the curfew lasted for four days during which occupation forces conducted large-scale search operations.

A curfew was also imposed on Balata camp and the village of Sarta in the governorate of Nablus. Following the horrendous massacre at the Ibrahimi Shrine, the Israeli authorities decided to extend the security cordon to include the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

The town of Hebron remained under curfew and curfews were subsequently imposed on the town of Nablus, on the village of Hawara and on Askar and Balata camps in the West Bank, as well as Jabalia, Shati', Nuseirat and Bureij camps in the Gaza Strip.

3. Demolition of houses

The human rights organization "Hadar" issued a press communiqué concerning the bombardments and raids to which a number of houses had been subjected at Rafah. The communiqué also referred to the inhuman practices against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

According to the communiqué, house demolition operations are usually preceded by the firing of shots and grenades into the houses, after which large military units seal off the area, impose a curfew and order the population to leave their houses. In one incident in which the Israeli authorities demolished four houses at Rafah in the Gaza Strip, the bombardment continued for six hours and caused tremendous damage to the house furniture, clothing, utensils, equipment and doors, etc. The walls were also damaged and cracked. As a result of the operation, most of the four houses were extensively damaged or destroyed. These houses were owned by the following citizens:

Salama Salim al-Sultan
Shahhada Abu Jazar
Muhammad Salman Abu Housin
Riadh al-Homs. (Al-Ittihad, 20/2/1994)

The Israeli authorities also demolished two houses for so-called "security reasons". One of them, which was demolished by anti-tank rockets, was situated in the village of Ram in the district of Jerusalem and was owned by Mar'ei Salim Mar'ei and the other, situated at Khan Yunis, belonged to Muhammad Salim al-Astal. (Al-Nahar and Al-Quds, 23-26/2/1994).

4. Martyrs

During the massacre at the Ibrahimi Shrine in the town of Hebron, about 36 Palestinians were killed and hundreds suffered wounds, most of which were serious. While the dead and injured were being taken to the hospitals, Israeli forces opened fire, killing a further 12 persons and wounding scores of other Palestinians.

The number of martyrs who fell during the month can be estimated at more than 61, bringing the total number of persons killed from the beginning of the intifada to the end of February 1994 to 1,636 male and female martyrs.

The following list gives the names of the persons killed in February 1994.

No.	Name	Age	Place of residence	Source of report
1.	Saleem Muwafi	24	Shaboura camp	Al-Quds, 4/2/1994
2.	Adnan ad-Souri	12	Jabalia camp	Al-Quds, 6/2/1994
3.	Khairi Abdul Jabir Youssuf	27	Bal'a/Tulkarm	Al-Quds, 6/2/1994
4.	Faris Abu Dhakar	17	Rafah	Al-Quds, 15/2/1994
5.	Iyhab Barakat	17	Rafah	Al-Quds, 16/2/1994
6.	Marwan Mahmoud Jahsh	20	Halhul	Al-Quds, 17/2/1994
7.	Anwar Rashid Tahir Qutait	23	Siris/Jenin	Al-Quds, 18/2/1994
8.	Abdul Rahman Muhammad Hamdan	23	Khan Yunis camp	Al-Quds, 25/2/1994
9.	Rami Nash'at Jamous	16	Nablus	Al-Quds, 26/2/1994
10.	Amjad Shahin	20	Jerusalem	Al-Quds, 26/2/1994
11.	Muhammad al-Danaf	25	Gaza	Al-Quds, 26/2/1994
12.	Khidhr al-Qarinawi	21	-	Al-Quds, 26/2/1994
13.	Jihad Abu Abduh	20	Bureij camp	Al-Quds, 26/2/1994
14.	Muhammad Youssuf Ghayyadha	26	Nahhalin	Al-Quds, 26/2/1994
15.	Atiyya Muhammad Atiyya al-Salayimeh	-	Hebron	Al-Nahar, 26/2/1994
16.	Fadi Tariq al-Isawi	16	Isawiya/Jerusalem	Al-Quds, 27/2/1994
17.	Ismail Adnan Ridhwan	-	Gaza	Al-Quds, 27/2/1994
18.	Amjad Ismail al-Badawi	18	Jalazone camp	Al-Quds, 27/2/1994
19.	Awni Abu Ajwa	17	Gaza	Al-Quds, 27/2/1994
20.	Ayman Ghazi Haniyya	17	Gaza	Al-Quds, 28/2/1994
21.	Najih Awadh Ziyadeh	21	Madama/Nablus	Al-Quds, 28/2/1994
22.	Maryam Ahmad Umar	38	Saniriya/Nablus	Al-Quds, 28/2/1994
23.	Kamal Talal Duwaikat	25	Askar camp	Al-Quds, 1/3/1994

No.	Name	Age	Place of residence	Source of report
24.	Abdul Rahman Al-Ajlouni	65	Hebron	Al-Quds, 1/3/1994
25.	Muhammad Salim Abu Jami'	23	Rahit	Al-Quds, 1/3/1994

Martyrs killed in the massacre at the Ibrahimi Shrine

No.	Name	Age
1.	Saleem Falah Idris	27
2.	Nur al-Muhtasib	24
3.	Tariq Adnan Muhammad Ashour	17
4.	Jamil Ayid Tamim al-Natsheh	50
5.	Salman Awwad al-Ja'bari	37
6.	Marwan Mutlaq Abu Najmeh	35
7.	Abdul Raheem Salameh Abu Snaineh	50
8.	Ahmad Abdullah Abu Snaineh	25
9.	Ala Badr Taha Abu Snaineh	17
10.	Sufyan Barakat Zahideh	25
11.	Ra'id Abdul Muttalib Hassan al-Natsheh	20
12.	Nimr Muhammad Nimr Mujahid	30
13.	Hatim Khidhr al-Fakhouri	-
14.	Wa'il Salah al-Muhtasib	28
15.	Kamal Jamal Qufaisheh	11
16.	Arafat Ribhi al-Bayidh	27
17.	Sabir Musa Katibeh	37
18.	Muhammad Atiyya al-Salayimeh	32
19.	Ismail Fayiz Qufaisheh	28
20.	Abdul Hamid Ibrahim al-Ja'bari	58
21.	Muhammad Raji Abu Hamdiyya Ghaith	50
22.	Walid Zuhair Ghaith	-
23.	Arafat Musa Baraqan	-
24.	Dhiyab Abdul Latif al-Karaki	23
25.	Rami Arafat al-Rajabi	11
26.	Khalid Hamza al-Karaki	-
27.	Talal Hammad Dandis	26
28.	Jabr Arif Abu Hadid	11
29.	Khalid Khalawi Abu Hussein Abu Snaineh	-
30.	Muhammad Sadiq Abu Za'nouneh	48
31.	Ayman Ayyoub al-Qawasimi	25

Martyrs killed in the massacre at the Ibrahimi Shrine

No.	Name	Age
32.	Zeidan Jabir	-
33.	Nadir Salim Zahideh	-
34.	Youssuf Khalil al-Haroub	-
35.	Kifah Abdul Mu'izz Marqeh	10
36.	Abdul Raheem al-Ajlouni	60

5. Violations against educational institutions

The Israeli authorities took a number of measures against educational institutions in the occupied territories. In addition to raids and other violations, they closed several schools and colleges. One of the main violations was committed at the end of the month when they suspended studies in all parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip until further notice. These violations against educational institutions are recorded below:

Closure of the Khan Yunis Secondary School for Boys. (Al-Nahar, 6/2/1994)

Israeli army units raided the students' residential accommodation at Al-Najah University/Nablus where they carried out a search for students from the Gaza Strip in order to expel them on the pretext that they had not obtained special permits. (Al-Quds, 7/2/1994)

Large army units raided and searched the Nahhalin Boys' and Girls' Schools. (Al-Quds, 15/2/1994)

Occupation forces raided the Bethlehem Secondary School where soldiers assaulted the students. (Al-Quds, 16/2/1994)

The military authorities closed the Al-Manfaluti Secondary School until further notice. (Al-Quds, 23/2/1994)

Israeli troops raided the College of Education at Gaza and arrested 15 of its students while the College was holding its final examination. (Al-Quds, 24/2/1994)

The Israeli authorities closed the UNRWA vocational training centre in the town of Ramallah. (Al-Quds, 24/2/1994)

The Israeli authorities suspended studies in all parts of the Gaza Strip until further notice. They also suspended studies in all parts of the West Bank for a period of three days. (Al-Nahar, 27/2/1994)

The Israeli army took over the Al-Hussein bin Ali School in the town of Hebron and converted it into a military barracks. (Al-Quds, 1/3/1994)